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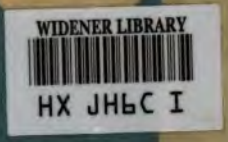


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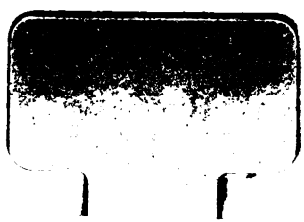

# A BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF THE

*LIFE, LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH,*

OF

# ROBERT MOTT,

SON OF

## JAMES AND MARY MOTT,

OF

*Mamaroneck, in the State of New-York.*

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"Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

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*NEW-YORK:*

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# A BRIEF ACCOUNT, &c.

His person was tall and graceful, his countenance expressive, his manners chaste and manly. He was naturally of a generous and independent spirit, of a cheerful disposition and quick apprehension, possessing a vigorous, active, and sympathetic mind. These properties qualified him for early usefulness in civil society, and, being enlivened by an uncommon turn of delicate pleasantry, rendered him peculiarly interesting and agreeable in social and domestic circles.

In very early life did the Lord visit him with clear manifestations of his love; and strong and humbling were the convictions on his mind, for transgressing the divine law, made known to his understanding by the clear, though secret, intimations of the spirit of Truth. Many were his strugglings, when quite a lad, between yielding to known duty, and gratifying wrong inclinations, at the risk of forfeiting that peace he at times greatly desired to possess. Things gross or immoral he always appeared to revolt from, though his open and volatile disposition led him, sometimes, into conduct that the spirit of Truth, in his own mind, would not justify nor admit; and in this wavering state he remained some time, "re-

solving and re-resolving," yet doing the same thing; until about the fifteenth year of his age, when the severe reproofs of instruction, (to which he was very susceptible) together with seasonable admonition by a friend, in a religious opportunity in the family, pointedly and forcibly addressed to him, proved so powerful, that he no longer resisted; but submitted to take up the cross, by yielding obedience to what he believed was required to be done, or left undone: which was soon evinced by his steady conduct and exemplary deportment. But so great was his vivacity, and propensity to youthful vanity, that he found it hard work to keep sufficiently submissive and on his guard; as appears from what he expressed in a letter to his father, when from home.—"Yielding in obedience is hard, indeed, to do; and it seems to me it is harder for me than many others; or else I am not so willing; the path of many of the youth of my age, and the foremost too, will not do for me, for it must be, with me, a resigning my whole heart, if I obtain peace of mind, which sometimes I hope, in measure, will be my lot."

He continued steady and improving in religious knowledge, till about the eighteenth year of his age, when he went to New-York, intending to reside there for a short time; but unexpectedly getting into business, he continued there, to his very great loss in a religious sense, being so far captivated by the numerous temptations to which he was exposed, that he gave way, by little and little, to many youthful vanities, and went into such company as he had before clearly seen the inconsistency and pernicious tendency of; and, consequently, lost the savour and relish for divine things, which he had experienced.

At this sad period of alienation from the favour of God, (which continued several years) he also separated himself from his friends, and relinquished his birthright, by marrying out of society. Thus, like a choice vine, whose hedges were all broken down, he was exposed on every side, and was almost laid waste and devoured! some with whom he associated, endeavouring to instil into his mind the poison of Deism, which, however, he never imbibed, as he declared in his last illness, on a mournful review of this part of his life—"That although he had deviated widely from the religious principles he was educated in, yet had he never, for a moment, doubted the rectitude of them."

Now He who had, in his childhood, brought him out of Egypt, mercifully re-visited him with inward rebukes for his backslidings, which, being also accompanied with some very heavy losses and disappointments, awakened him to reflection, and gave him to see the great injury he had sustained, by not keeping on the watch. Anguish and self-condemnation ensued: deep was his contrition, and bitter were his draughts of remorse, in secret and in the night seasons! Thus contrited and reduced, his mind was frequently brought into profound stillness, inwardly waiting for the return of the messenger of his violated covenant. About this time, a friend who came to the city on a religious visit, and who was a stranger to his situation, in an opportunity in the family, thus addressed him. "Robert, thou art now partaking of bitter cups, in consequence of thy deviations; yea, so bitter that thy very soul loaths them; but if submitted to, and patiently abode under, thou wilt yet experience the light of the Moon to be as the light of the Sun; and the light

of the Sun, as the light of seven days :"—which was verified fully during his last illness, in the faith expressed by divers friends who visited him, that all would be well—comparable to the light of the Moon; and the strong and clear prospect and evidence he had himself, near his close, of his future happiness—to the light of the Sun; which was, indeed, as the light of seven days.

Several years previous to his being taken ill, he was restored to the unity of his friends; and having been favoured to experience the renovating power of divine love, as a furnace purifying his mind, he became, though much exposed in the particular line of business he was then in, an example of the believers, in conduct and conversation. He was also engaged to rule his own house well, subjecting his children, and governing them and his dependants with mildness and firmness; and was, in every station, much beloved. Though he mostly appeared cheerful, yet could he not always conceal the deep exercise of mind into which, at times, he was plunged; which cannot be better expressed than in his own language, in a letter to a near connection—"Although I have, for many months, believed it right for me to anoint myself, and not appear unto men to fast, yet my garments have been sackcloth, and ashes have covered my head; my path has been in the wilderness, where hardly a green leaf could be plucked."

In the early part of the summer of 1804, he took a heavy cold, and his health apparently declining, he was induced to take a journey to the northern part of this state, in hopes of regaining it.—After being out a week or two, he attended the quarterly meeting at Easton, in eighth month, and while sitting therein, was seized with an un-

usual sensation at his breast, and stepping out, discharged about a pint of blood from his lungs; and in two or three days nearly as much more, by which his strength was greatly reduced. He soon after returned home, but notwithstanding various means used, his health gradually declined, and several turns of bleeding afterwards taking place, increased his weakness, and tended to hasten his dissolution. During his confinement to his chamber, (the precious remnant of his days) he manifested great resignation to divine disposal, and was preserved in much patience and composure, even under excruciating pain, and bodily distress; and made many edifying and interesting remarks and observations, some of which were penned, and are as follows.

Soon after his return from Easton, feeling symptoms of bleeding, a physician was called, who opened a vein, and observing Robert's countenance to be very solemn, said, "don't be alarmed, Mr. Mott:" he looked at the Doctor, and replied—"I am not alarmed, but I thought at such "an awful time as this, it was right to endeavour "to have my mind composed"—(apprehending danger of immediate suffocation if bleeding should take place.)

A few days after, a friend remarked to him the danger of his complaint, and the precariousness of his situation; he calmly said, "I know it to be "so, yet have not a wish it should be otherwise."

In the beginning of the 11th month, he became more apprehensive that the disorder was seated on his lungs, and without the special intervention of the divine hand, must gradually wear him away; yet he was mostly preserved calm, endeavouring to feel true resignation; though there were hours of bitterness to his soul. One even-

ing, after a day of great weakness of body, and solemn reflection of mind, he mentioned to a young man who called to see him, the pain it gave him to look over some of the days of his youth: admonishing him to select suitable companions; telling him that by neglecting it, he would imperceptibly be led into hurtful company and practices, as he had been; "but I hope thou hast made a stand, and I wish thee to keep to it. I have been glad to see thee so steady at meetings, and hope thou wilt continue so, both to week-day meetings, and to meetings for discipline."

Having omitted making his *Will*, he earnestly commented on the impropriety of leaving Wills to be made, when, as he expressed it, "the poor soul has enough to do to think on things relating to its future existence, without the burden of worldly concerns."

In the latter part of the 11th month, one of his sisters-in-law, sitting by him, remarked, that it was an excellent thing to have a vine and a fig-tree of our own, to sit under in time of trial; which she believed was his case. He replied—"It is, indeed, an excellent thing; and I have, at this time, and often in time past, desired for us, that all the family might get down to that which would never deceive"—adding, after a pause—"Although some may have to pass through the waters, they shall not overflow them, or through the fire, it shall not kindle upon them, if their confidence is where it ought to be."

Some nights after, having profuse night sweats, his wife asked him if he would have the door open, and less covering on his bed; to which he said, "no, my love, none of these things produce

it; it is the progress of the disorder; and unless it receive a check, it will, ere long, take me off; and the prospect appears awful indeed. It is only to the mercy of God I can look."—He also said, "I am willing to try what simple things will do, believing it our duty to use the "means in our power to remove complaints."

Twelfth month, ninth, being first day, feeling rather better when he awoke, he told his wife he did not wish to see any person not of the family, that day; and soon appeared to be under exercise of mind, which continued through most of the day. In the afternoon, on his wife's telling him she thought some suitable company, to have a little innocent, cheerful conversation, would do him good; he said, "a little is good, no doubt; but we ought to be very sparing of it when a person's situation is as critical as mine is: the prospect of the change that is perhaps near at hand, makes me tremble, and ought to make all tremble.—I have no dependence on any thing I have known or experienced, but on the mercy and goodness of that Almighty Power who rules all things."

One evening his wife and father were sitting quiet with him, when his little son, about eight years old, and two young women, his cousins, came in; and as he seemed much oppressed, one of them asked if their coming in did not occasion it? He said, "no, cousin, I am glad to have you in here as often as you please, and it is convenient—it is a good lesson for you, to see what you must come to"—and then addressed himself to one of them for some time, expressing his great anxiety for her, in her critical state of health; entreating her to prepare for such a situation while health was yet permitted her; telling her, that in such an hour as he had passed through, the feel-

ings of the body were such, that it was difficult even to say 'Lord have mercy upon me'—reminding her of the import of the Psalmist's words, as what she would find verified—'That an hour in the Lord's presence is better than a thousand elsewhere.'—After this, a solemn silence ensued for a few minutes, when, all at once, the Lord's loving kindness so broke in upon those present, that even his little son burst into a flood of tears, without a word being spoken—when Robert, in the midst of tears, said, "these are precious feelings, to feel that we love each other after such a manner, that it so breaks forth from the oldest to the youngest." After sitting some time in this situation, with little more said, he was so exhausted as to need getting to bed, when he tenderly and affectionately kissed his cousins, and would have kissed his son, but the dear child was so renewedly affected, that Robert paused to weep himself, and express his exquisitely tender feelings, and then asked the child if, when he was gone, he would mind his mother in all things? To which he replied, "yes, dear father"—and soon after the child retired, he said, "surely this leaves no room to doubt the love of the great Master."

Second month, twenty-first; After relief from great oppression at his breast, he remarked, "how necessary it is when in pain and distress, to endeavour for patience, and quietly to wait the right time for relief."

Twenty-third—This evening he seemed very feeble, and being apprehensive his disorder was making a more rapid progress, he said to his father, "I think thou hadst best write home, and let them know how I am; I want to see as many of them as I can, once more;" (meaning his brothers and sisters,) and after sitting quiet a short

space, added, "the separation of soul and body is an awful subject to contemplate, especially when we take into view, that nothing impure can have admittance into the kingdom of heaven."

On his brothers and sisters' coming out of the country to see him, he was much affected, and said, "I rejoice in seeing you, and in being once more together, if it is only to feel that we love each other; whether I shall be continued with you or not, is uncertain; he that raised Lazarus from the dead, and bade the dry bones live, is as able as ever he was; and can, by his word, restore me to health, if consistent with his will; but I desire in all things to be contented. I cannot find words to express the fervency of desire I have felt, that you, my dear brothers and sisters, may so live as to become lights in your neighbourhood: not being contented with a regular life and steady attendance of meetings only, but labouring to become deep in the spirit of your minds; that so your whole conduct and converse may have an animating tendency on those around you: ardently have I craved your preservation and advancement, even in the night season, when my head has been on my pillow."

One evening, conversing on the business in which himself and brothers were concerned, he expressed his desire that religious men might be more sought after, and have the preference in the different employments of the partnership: saying, "I believe it would not be so difficult as is imagined to procure such, if a disposition were maintained to be content with a moderate profit ourselves, that we might thereby be enabled to be more liberal to those we employ, and to convince them by our conduct, that we were not desirous of exacting the utmost farthing. I once

thought, as some others do, that there was no religion in transacting business, and if it was done fairly and regularly, all was well—but I see very differently now."

His sister taking leave of him, he said, "dear sister, we have always loved each other, and I believe always shall. I have sometimes feared thou art as I have been, too much like the young man, who turned away sorrowful, when he found he must sell all, before he could become a disciple. I want thou shouldst surrender the whole heart; it is the whole heart that is called for. Thou hast a great charge—thou hast precious daughters to educate, to whom virtue will descend, as thou art careful on thy part to example them well."

Third month seventh—This evening, he said "What a great privilege it is to be educated in the right principles—the principles of truth; it often prevents many doubts in riper age; and an additional privilege, and highly to be prized, is the being frequently favoured with the company of really religious people, which has been my lot, and the thought of it has often humbled me. And, although I have, in many respects, deviated widely from the principles I was educated in, I never for a moment doubted the rectitude of them."

On the ninth, he said—"To those who, at such a time as this, cannot, with any degree of confidence, look forward with hope, how awful must be the prospect; and if we may judge from observation, too few of mankind think enough about it in time of health. How often do we observe, in little circles of our society, that the conversation is generally about the things of this life, and subjects of a very trifling nature."

13th—He said, "my distress is so great that I know not how to describe it better than by compar-

ing it to my joints all coming apart. I greatly desire that my patience may hold out to the end." It was remarked to him, that he had been abundantly favoured with patience hitherto, and it was hoped would be. He replied "I hope I shall, but my pain is so great, that, dare I do it, I could wish for the final close; but I know that the Master's time is the best, not only in this, but all things else." And further, after a little pause, observed, "that nothing appeared in his way," which he had frequently expressed before, and then added—"But, oh! if I had not something more at this time to support my mind, than not having any thing in my way, how awfully trying would my situation be! and how much more so must be the condition of those who, in bodily distress like mine, cannot look forward to the awful change, and say, that nothing is in their way." He also said—"I desire my coffin may not be made of mahogany, but of pine, or some other common wood."

18th—After a very trying night, not only of bodily distress, but deep poverty of spirit, he said to a brother who sat by him, "It is an awful thing to contemplate the change that will likely soon take place; I hardly know how to bring my mind to it, notwithstanding I find nothing stands in the way: I am sensible that I have nothing to trust to, but the mercy and goodness of the Lord; and have no desire to be raised, unless my life may be spent in greater dedication and devotedness than it has hitherto been." It was remarked to him, that it was a great attainment to discover nothing in the way; that it was a consoling reflection to his friends, to believe that his peace was fully made; and that it frequently happened, and probably in his case, that the strippedness of mind, and the bodily affliction meted to him,

were much more on the account of others than himself.

A friend from the country coming in to see him, Robert, calling him by name, said, "I am glad to see thee; I was thinking of thee this morning; thou art filling one important station in society after another; I greatly desire thou mayest be so entirely given up, as to fill them with propriety. I feel a great flow of love for society, and much desire that friends may not be half Jew and half Ashdod—but real Quakers."

To a young woman that came in—"Thou wilt find it hard work to be on such a bed as this; I wish thou mayest be concerned to prepare for it, and endeavour to know whether thou art discharging thy duty to God; as it is this, and not merely being a Presbyterian, Quaker, or Church-woman, that will do." A little after, being in great pain, he said—"The Master's time is the best time; but it is hard to keep sufficiently in the patience;" and added—"Leave me not, in this time of great distress and trial, O God, but preserve me in patience to the end." A friend coming in, he took him by the hand, and said—"Thou seest me a poor, worn-out creature; I am looking forward to the change with joy." And after a little pause—"Oh, what a flow of love I feel; I could pour out my very soul for the good of mankind: yea, if it could benefit one poor individual."

On being asked how he was, he replied, "growing weaker in body, but stronger in that which maketh alive unto God."

In the afternoon, having said considerable to encourage a friend in the ministry, who, as he apprehended, was too backward and diffident; after a little time of silence and quiet, he exclaimed—"What is it I see! I this moment see, with

great clearness, that when I go hence, it will be into everlasting peace and joy, where I shall be forever happy: yea, I see it as clearly as I see the sun shine on that floor!" pointing his finger to where the sun shone in through the window. And a little after, being in great pain—"I am going where pain and sickness are not known."

In the early part of the night, after the family had retired, addressing himself to one of his brothers, he said "O how I have regretted the not having thy company steadily during this day! I longed for it, because I knew thou couldst participate in the enjoyment: I have seen with full assurance, that my peace is made, with a promise, as clear as the sun, that my change shall be happy." His mind appearing to be swallowed up in the ocean of boundless love, after a little while, he added—"How awful has my situation been! I have frequently trembled at the prospect of resting all my hopes on a state of quiet resignation, together with the faith of others, that all would be well with me; but now, all doubts are removed by the assurance I feel: O the brightness of the prospect I have had this day, and the love and joy that I feel; it is, indeed, a foretaste of what is to come: what a mercy!" During that night, while his wife, father, and one of his brothers were sitting with him, he said, "sleep seems gone from me"—and on its being proposed to him to take a gentle anodyne, he answered—"Oh no, my soul is enjoying that which is far superior to sleep." A little after, perceiving that his wife, who was on the bed by him, could not sleep, he tenderly enquired—"Canst thou not sleep, my dear?" She says no—he adds—"Why, what is it that banishes sleep from us all—what is it that so

covers our minds this night?—It is the Heavenly Father's love, superseding every thing else."

The latter part of the night, observing his wife and brother to be affected, he said—" Don't mourn—rather rejoice—there is no cause for mourning." On being answered that tears of gratitude would sometimes steal from the eye—replied,—" I know it."

In the morning of the nineteenth, he was very weak and languid, but revived between ten and elven o'clock—and to some of his relatives who had not been with him the day before, said—" Don't weep, but rejoice—there is no cause for mourning—it is no chimera, no shadow, but a glorious certainty, that my change will be happy."

In the afternoon, at his request, a number of his acquaintance were sent for; to each of whom, separately, he was admirably strengthened to relieve his mind, by the communication of counsel and advice, with which divers of them were much affected—but no part of what was said to them was taken down. That evening he was much exhausted, and some of those around him apprehended that dissolution was near; on discovering which, he desired all might be quiet as possible, saying—" I should not be alarmed if a change were immediately to take place."

20th—Was extremely weak, and spoke with difficulty. To his sister, who was sitting near he said—" Thou seest, dear sister, that I am almost worn out; my hands have done very little for the promotion of the cause of truth; and yet, through infinite mercy, I have experienced forgiveness," or to this import; and then added —" Thou hast work to do; the Master has work for thee; be faithful and resign thyself entirely into his arms—and though we shall not be long

together here—we shall, if thou wilt but follow, meet again in the abodes of bliss. I am going there; my God hath said it, who cannot withdraw his promise."—A little after, to a very dear friend from a distance, who came on purpose to see him, he expressed himself thus—"Thou seest thy friend in a very reduced state, and according to the course of nature, very near an awful change; but thou seest him with a composed mind, and in full assurance that the doors of acceptance are opened to receive him, whenever the change shall come.—I am glad thou art here."

He lived twelve or fifteen hours after this, but said very little upon any subject, his strength being so exhausted that it was with difficulty he could speak; but his understanding continued perfectly clear, to the close; which appeared to be very easy, and was in great quietude and sweetness, on the 21st of 3d month, 1805; in the 34th year of his age.

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☞ The foregoing is designed by LYDIA P. MOTT, not only as a memorial of her beloved husband, but to exhibit the triumph of grace over nature, to exalt this grace in the view of those he has left behind, and to prove that "the effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance forever."